

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

*Ed Harrington
Weymouth Town Council
District Five Councilor
75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189
(781) 340-5020*



July 15, 2014

The Honorable Martha Coakley
Attn: Antitrust Division
Office of Attorney General
One Ashburton Place, 18th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Via facsimile to (617) 722-0184

RE: Merger of South Shore Hospital and Partners Health Care

Madam Attorney General,

I wish to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed merger between the South Shore Hospital and Partners Health Care and the settlement proposal that you have reached with Partners.

This merger is extremely important to the South Weymouth residents whom I represent. I speak to people daily who feel very strongly that Weymouth and the South Shore deserve access to the highest quality, best health care in the world for which Partners has set the standard. The settlement that you have established brings this care to this community while at the same time guarding against unreasonable future cost increases in an era of consolidation across the health care spectrum. I see this as a significant win-win.

I respect greatly that this process has been extensive, but I have now come to the opinion that it has become exhaustive as well. Many of the critics who have recently emerged to this proposed settlement agreement have themselves sought mergers with community hospitals, and no doubt will continue to do so. The market and federal health care policy forces that are pushing the industry to reduce costs by consolidating more, not less, are precisely the reasons that community hospitals are merging with networks. Those forces and policies are no different in South Weymouth than they are anywhere else in Massachusetts and it is just flat out disingenuous to suggest that is the case.

I congratulate all parties for the fine work that they have done to arrive at this settlement proposal. I support it and ask that this matter be concluded as soon as possible as it is vital to the people I represent.

Sincerely,

Ed Harrington
Town Councilor
District Five